

Refugee office waiting for accommodation

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HOME Affairs Minister Malusi Gigaba says his department will reopen the Cape Town Refugee Reception Office as soon as the Public Works Department (PWD) has finalised the allocation of suitable office accommodation.

Gigaba made the undertaking in a written reply to a parliamentary question from the DA's Archibold Figlan who had wanted to know whether the department had complied fully with the order of the Supreme Court of Appeal to

reopen the Cape Town Refugee Reception Office by March.

He had also asked if director-general Mkuseli Apleni had submitted monthly reports to the organisations, including Scalabrini Centre, that instituted legal action against the department.

The Cape Town Refugee Reception Office was closed in 2012 for new applications and served only asylum seekers who had already applied for refugee status. New applicants make applications in Pretoria, Durban and Musina.

Gigaba said his department engaged

DPW in the Western Cape last December, advising them of the judgment.

He said they had submitted initial needs assessment for office accommodation in January.

“The department submitted the final needs assessment to the DPW during February, and their head office has issued a procurement instruction to their regional office in Cape Town.

“The DPW provided a project execution plan on April 6 whereby the estimated time of occupation is October 1,” Gigaba said.